

THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

Friday, January 23, 2009

Contributions warm Comfort Socks' toes

Sock Donations are being collected this Saturday (Jan. 24), 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at Walmart in Shallotte



Photo by Laura Lewis

Theresa Tese is pleased with people who donated to her nonprofit Comfort Socks cause for the homeless, including these 72 pairs of Adidas socks contributed by UNCW's athletic department..

By LAURA LEWIS

It was just a few months ago that Theresa Tese launched her socks charity to help warm the feet and hearts of the homeless.

Since then, people in the community have donated hundreds of pairs of socks to the nonprofit, Comfort Socks.

In December, Tese delivered nearly 400 pairs to Brunswick Family Assistance in Shallotte and Good Shepherd Center and First Fruit Ministries in Wilmington.

UNCW's athletic department just contributed 72 pairs of socks from Adidas, one of the department's sponsors. More than 300 student athletes have pledged to help contribute more socks as projects come up, most immediately to the 400-pair goal Tese seeks for distribution at the upcoming Homeless Veterans Stand Down.

The event is scheduled for this spring in Wilmington, when homeless veterans are bused in to receive meals and "goody bags" of clean items.

The Elks Lodge in Wilmington has agreed to put Comfort Socks in its April budget.

A sock-a-thon conducted at the end of November at Angelo's Pizzeria & Bistro in Shallotte had people coming out in the rain to contribute the requested footwear for Comfort Socks.

"I felt happy we did 357 pairs in December," said Tese, a former resident of Long Island who moved to Brunswick County in August with her family. "It really was my first month, the way I look at it."

From 11 a.m.-4 p.m. this Saturday (Jan. 24), Tese plans to be at Walmart in Shallotte to collect more sock donations.

"I'm hoping people will come and bring socks for our purpose," she said.

Comfort Socks is listed on www.nc211.org, a community service Web site that connects residents with nonprofit, community health and human service resources in North Carolina like BFA, food pantries, Hope Harbor Home in Supply and Carousel Center for Abused Children in Wilmington.

Comfort Socks is on the site under its parent provider, United Way of the Cape Fear Area. The only items on its wish list are new, crew-style white socks for men, women and children to be collected and distributed to homeless agencies or those that provide assistance for no- or low-income or disaster victims in Brunswick, New Hanover and Pender counties.

Earlier this month, Tese was interviewed about Comfort Socks on WBFJ, a Winston-Salem radio station. Her next plan is to solicit a comedian or other entertainer to donate time for a fund-raising night to benefit the sock charity.

She also plans to be interviewed about Comfort Socks soon by Angie Hill on "Encouraging Word," a program that airs at 10 a.m. daily via Shallotte gospel radio station WVCB 1410 AM.

Tese said she seeks more drop-off points, interested merchants who will allow her to place and maintain Comfort Socks collection boxes in their establishments.

She said she also has received donations in the mail, including a woman in Texas who sent a pair of good quality children's socks.

"This is a way to easily help," Tese said.

It makes the contributors feel good, "and it makes us feel good," she said. "But the main thing is that the homeless get helped."

More information about Comfort Socks is available on the Internet at www.comfortsocksonline.org. Donations also can be sent to Comfort Socks at P.O. Box 477, Supply, NC 28462 or, for ground deliveries, to 2401 Leonard Road SW, Supply, NC 28462.